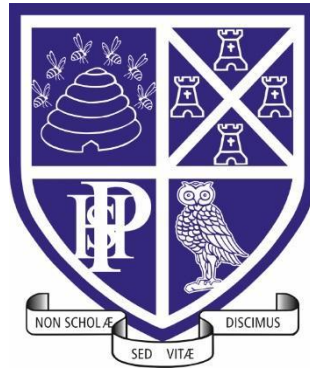


Plymouth High School for Girls

“For life, not school, we learn”



Year 7

Information Booklet A Guide for Parents and Students

September 2025



Headteacher: Mr Simon Underdown

Head of Year 7: Miss Shellie Joynes

Year 7 Tutors

7BRN Anthony

Mrs P Brown

Co-tutors: Mrs A Wright & Miss S Joynes

7GDC Kendall

Mr P Goodchild

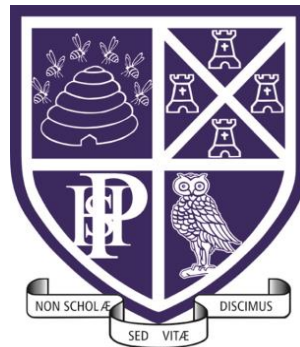
7ERS Latimer

Mrs E Richards

Co-tutor: Mrs H Brownbridge

7LJS Temple

Miss L Jones



**Plymouth High School for Girls
St Lawrence Road
North Hill
Plymouth
PL4 6HT**

Tel: 0333 360 2230

E-mail: office@plymouthhighschoolforgirls.org.uk

Website: www.phsg.org

Facebook: [@PlymouthHighSchoolforGirls](https://www.facebook.com/PlymouthHighSchoolforGirls)

A Guide to Year 7

Contents of this Booklet

Welcome to Plymouth High School

Key Dates for Year 7

Contacts

Communications - Accessibility of Staff and Response Times

Charging

Reporting of Academic Progress

Attitude to Learning

Tutor Group organisation

Home-school contact

Sources of support for pupils

Homework

Extra-curricular activities

Thinking, teaching and learning

The key stage 3 curriculum at Plymouth High School for Girls

A subject-by-subject look at Year 7 and beyond

Personal, Social and Health Education - PSHE

Student Voice

Anti-Bullying Policy

Safety On-line

Learner Support Centre

Reading at PHSG

Curriculum Overview - please see school website

Welcome to Plymouth High School

This guide aims to give parents an overview of what students at Plymouth High School will be experiencing in key stage 3 (Years 7 to 9), particularly in Year 7.

As your child continues to settle into life at Plymouth High, we hope that she is telling you about the many positive experiences she is having.

Our school has been a member of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust since February 2021 and we have already benefitted from being part of a larger family. However, our core values remain the same; personal development, happiness and academic achievement to go hand in hand at Plymouth High. We pride ourselves on our school's friendly, family feel which helps us to create an environment where every student can explore and develop their talents and interests. Visitors often comment on the warm and friendly feel of our school and students are very positive about their experiences at Plymouth High. The individual contribution of each member of the school community is valued. As set out on the school website and in our prospectus, the following statements of values and beliefs underpin the curriculum at Plymouth High School.

We:

- Challenge students academically to help them make the best possible progress.
- Are supportive, caring, professional and positive.
- Value and respect every individual as a unique and special human being.
- Build self-confidence and personal motivation.
- Recognise and promote each student's talents.
- Encourage truthfulness, self-discipline, independence and responsibility.
- Take pride in the students' work and achievements.
- Set high standards by example and expect our students to follow suit.
- Show mutual respect and consideration.
- Actively promote equal opportunities and tolerance.
- Put safeguarding of our students at the heart of what we do.

We value very highly our partnership with parents in striving to meet our aims.

This booklet contains a list of contact details, although your child's tutor is usually the first point of contact for parents. The form tutor will be able to re-direct parental questions as necessary to ensure that the most appropriate colleague is available to assist.

Simon Underdown
Headteacher

Key dates for Year 7 Students. School calendar 2025-2026
[Plymouth High School for Girls - Term dates & KS3,4 5 overview](#)

Contact Details

Parents and students are encouraged to communicate with the school if they have any concerns or questions about courses. The school switchboard can be contacted on 0333 360 2230 where a message can be left for a particular member of staff to phone you when they are not teaching. As there may be some inevitable delay in receiving a response through this route it is often more efficient to contact staff via email.

To help with this I have listed the e-mail addresses of subject leaders and key staff below with an indication of their role:

Role	Name	Email Address
Head of Year 7	Miss S Joynes	Shellie.Joynes@phsg.tsat.uk
Assistant to Heads of Year	Mrs N Gill	Nichola.Gill@phsg.tsat.uk
Year 7 Tutors	Mrs P Brown Mr P Goodchild Mrs E Richards Miss L Jones	Penny.Brown@phsg.tsat.uk Pete.Goodchild@phsg.tsat.uk Ellen.Richards@phsg.tsat.uk Lowenna.Jones@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of English	Mrs S Blunden-Currie	Siobhan.Blundencurrie@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of Mathematics	Mrs G Freeman-Alford	Georgina.Freemanalford@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of Science	Mr A Waite	Adrian.Waite@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of Design and Technology	Mrs G Young	Gemma.Young@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of MFL	Mrs H Walsh	Heidi.Walsh@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of History/Law/Politics	Mr R Mallard	Richard.Mallard@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of Geography	Mr L Graves	Leon.Graves@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of Religious Education	Miss T McAuliffe	Tanya.McAuliffe@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of Art	Mr T Varrall	Tom.Varrall@phsg.tsat.uk
Subject Leader for Music	Ms K Marcer-Griffiths	Kristy.Marcergriffiths@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of Drama	Miss C Crouch	Claire.Crouch@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of Physical Education	Ms A Pickles	Alison.Pickles@phsg.tsat.uk
Head of PSHE	Mrs S Lee	Sophie.Lee@phsg.tsat.uk
Subject Leader for Computing	Mr P Richards	Peter.Richards@phsg.tsat.uk
Learning Support Manager	Mrs P Simister	Patricia.Simister@phsg.tsat.uk

Communications - Accessibility of Staff and Response Times

At Plymouth High School, we believe that good communication between school and home is essential. Children and young people achieve more when school and parents/carers work together. Parents/carers can help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve, and how they can help.

In recent years, communications between home and school have shifted quite dramatically from pen and paper to email; with e-mail becoming the preferred and predominant mode of communication. E-mail provides us with a quick, cheap and easy means of communication. The ease of communication via e-mail has many advantages but with it comes problems as the expectation for almost instantaneous reply, in a well-informed, considered and timely manner, appears to be on the increase with complaints following when this has not been the case.

As a school, our first priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning and we must make sure that email as a means of communication doesn't distract teachers from their primary focus, teaching. On any one day a teacher will have a plethora of demands on their time including up to five lessons teaching (and tutor time, lunch duties, clubs and other activities, and after school practices). Teachers cannot and are not expected to monitor and manage their inbox during lessons or at other times in the day, when they should be planning and preparing for lessons, assessing student work or carrying out school duties. The school (and you) expect teachers to be fully prepared, focused and engaged with students and supporting their learning.

We would never wish to discourage parents from communicating with staff, establishing a relationship and working together. Parental communication is essential; we do not always get it right and we need your feedback to help us to continue to improve.

However, the school has a duty of care to staff, as it does to students. This includes a responsibility to ensure that the staff's workload is manageable and does not unreasonably intrude into their private life. We have an incredibly dedicated team of staff at Plymouth High and we want to make them feel valued. It is therefore essential that we respect them and help them to maintain a sustainable workload.

The following outlines what we regard to be important considerations when using e-mail communication between home and school.

All communication must respect the dignity of the recipient.

- 1. Within 48 hours - receipt of an email will be acknowledged (during term time only but not after 5pm nor over a weekend).*
- 2. Within 5 working days - provide a response to the email by telephone or in writing (including an email). This may include informing the sender that more time is required to provide a full response. If this is the case staff should indicate a time frame in which a response should be expected.*
- 3. If a member of staff is not able to deal with the email directly then they will pass it on to the most appropriate person and inform the sender that they have done so.*
- 4. Staff will not be expected to monitor or respond to emails out of their normal working hours (including weekends and published school holidays). Whilst parents may compose emails at hours to suit their*

own needs, we would ask that emails are not normally sent outside of a member of staff's normal working hours. Mobile phones and other electronic devices that enable staff to access their school emails when away from school can make it difficult to 'ignore' a message from a parent, leading to unnecessary worry and anxiety on the part of the member of staff.

- 5. Whilst this is extremely rare, if a member of staff receives an email which is of an aggressive tone, sets unreasonable demands or could otherwise be interpreted as harassing, they will refer this to a senior line manager in the school, who will decide if consideration needs to be given to dealing with further communication under our Complaints Policy.*

We will be reviewing all aspects of our Communications Policy and update it regularly. If you have any thoughts as to how we can improve communication between school and home, please do let me know.



Charging

As our students embark on their new courses, we would like to highlight a few points around costs and charging beyond what is already provided by the school.

All students receive a photocopy allowance which enables them to print and copy work up to a set limit. Once they exceed that limit, they will need to purchase more credits in school.

Textbooks are provided in all subjects where they are required, but in order to keep costs down, these are often provided as a class set which are kept in school and used by more than one student. Where students wish to take a book home, make notes, annotate it, and generally have ownership of the text, we can sell the book at cost price to the student. As we often get large reductions on sets of books this may be cheaper than buying the book oneself. The department will advise by letter when these are available and the price.

In addition to these common themes across departments, some subjects have very specific items and costs which parents should be aware of when students embark on these courses.

Design Technology

An annual voluntary contribution of £7.50 is asked to go towards the materials purchased and used by the student. Non-payment does not mean the student cannot participate in the project, but without the continued support of donations we would not be able to produce such quality products or run such exciting projects.

We ask students to bring their own ingredients and their own navy-blue apron to their practical food lessons.

English

Resources will be issued by the English Department.

Geography

All students require a clipboard for their fieldwork. These can be purchased at most superstores for around £2. We endeavour to try and take every year group out on a fieldtrip each year. To make this financially viable for the school we may ask for a small donation in the region of about £3 per student. Non-payment does not mean the student cannot go on the trip, but without the continued support of donations further trips would be cancelled in the long run.

Mathematics

A scientific calculator is required and will be used in some lessons in year 7 and increasingly in each school year. We encourage students to buy the correct calculator when they join the school and then continue to use the same calculator all the way through to their GCSE's so that they are really familiar with their own equipment. Calculator recommendations are further on in this booklet. We write in pencil in mathematics lessons. A mathematics set is also required containing a pair of compasses and a protractor as a minimum. Students should also have a purple pen for self-assessing and editing.

MFL

Glue stick and highlighters are required.

Sciences

A natural display calculator is required. We would recommend the same calculator as recommended by the Mathematics Department.

As your daughter will be studying some of these courses, please could you pay the required amount(s) through the school payment system or as directed by the Head of Department as soon as possible.

Reporting of Academic Progress of Year 7 2025 - 2026

Your child is in a tutor group of 30-32 students. Her tutor will (as well as getting to know her generally), track her academic progress and keep in touch with you with regard to particular successes and any issues that may need discussing. With this in mind, your daughter's tutor will contact you either by email; phone or letter periodically during the year to discuss how things are going and whether there is any need for you to come in for a more detailed discussion. This contact is most likely to be around the times of the reports home, but could be at any time as appropriate. Please do not hesitate to contact them should you wish to come into school or if there is anything you wish to raise. The home/school partnership is a two-way process and we would hope that you will not wait for us to contact you if you feel there is something to raise.

Parents' Evenings are listed on the school calendar. You will be able to discuss your child's progress with her subject teachers during your appointments.

KS3 Examinations will take place during the week commencing the 18th May 2026.

For term and holiday dates, please see the "Key Dates" link near the beginning of this booklet or refer to the school website. The newsletter, which is issued half termly, contains news and reminders of up-coming events. This is also available on the school's website as well as all letters and communications to parents.

Tutor Group Organisation

Year 7 is organised into four tutor groups, each named after the tutor's staff letters. Each tutor group is also a House group and all the students in one tutor group will belong to the same House. Each tutor group has a form room where the group meets for registration with their tutor and is available to them for social time at lunchtime. Students are not grouped by ability in their tutor groups.

When they enter Year 8 the students will be assigned a new tutor who will take them through the rest of their Plymouth High journey. They will remain in their house groups. The assignment of a new tutor enables the specialist Year 7 tutor team to deal with the transition of the next year group.

The form tutor sees the group each morning for registration. S/he has an overview of pupils' progress and welfare. In most cases the form tutor will be the first reference point for both students and parents. Forms in Year 7 also have Peer mediators. These are Year 10 students attached to each tutor group who have applied for the responsibility role and received mediation training. They will visit their assigned tutor group regularly and are invaluable sources of support for younger students.

In Year 7, students are also taught in their House groups (A, K, L, T following the school 'Houses' – Anthony, Kendall, Latimer and Temple) for nearly all their subjects, though for Technology they are in smaller groups. There is no setting by ability at this stage.

During key stage 4, students will still be in their tutor groups for registration and Personal Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE), but for most of their lessons they are taught in groups according to which GCSE options they have chosen.

Home-School Contact

We welcome contact with parents, so please do get in touch if you have any queries, concerns or comments. The school telephone number is 033 33 602 230. When you are connected, you will hear an 'options' menu which is largely self-explanatory.

If you wish to report your child's absence, then please select option 1 on the telephone menu or e-mail the school absence@plymouthhighschoolforgirls.org.uk **It is important that you contact us on each day of your child's absence**, or we will assume to expect her in school.

If you wish to speak to a member of staff, please contact the subject teacher, the form tutor, Mrs Gill, Assistant to the Heads of Year, or Miss Joynes, Head of Year 7, as appropriate. If we are not available, we will get back to you as soon as we can. A list of contact email addresses is included in this booklet.

We may need to contact you during the school day, if, for example, your child is unwell. It is essential that we have current contact numbers, including emergency contacts. Please let us know immediately if this information changes.

As a parent of a student in the school, you are automatically a member of the Association of Parents, Teachers and Friends of Plymouth High School. The PTFA aims to raise money to purchase extra facilities for the benefit of the pupils in the school. The Association aims to combine fund-raising with enjoyable social events. Meetings are held regularly in the school and new faces are always welcomed. See the newsletter or website for dates and details.



YEAR 7 Assessment and Reporting

We will send reports home to you three times in year 7. In the autumn, spring and summer terms.

We want ALL students to:

- Make progress and excel.
- Know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Know that they can achieve We will not set targets in KS3 – we want to raise their aspirations.
- Celebrate their progress, whatever their starting points.

How do we assess and report student progress?

For the first two reports home we will focus on your daughter's attitude towards her learning. This will be reported using the numbers 1 to 4 as shown below in the example

Subject	ATL	ATL
Subject A	A	1
Subject B	A	2
Subject C	B	3a
Subject D	C	4b

In this report your child has been issued with two pieces of information regarding their Attitude to Learning.

The first is a statement that is based on how well your child is engaging with the content being covered in lessons and how well they are learning.

Your child will receive A, B or C that relates to one of the three statements below:

A.

Your child has been successful in both the learning and application of the content taught to date. They have successfully met the demands of the content that they have been presented with in class.

B.

Your child has at times found some of the content difficult. They must try to work through these difficulties and keep applying themselves to gain full understanding and make progress.

C.

Your child has found a considerable amount of the content to date difficult. We would recommend that they use their knowledge organisers to learn key terminology, facts and processes to help support their learning journey and to take up the ongoing support that teachers offer in class to ensure that these difficulties are dealt with quickly to improve understanding and confidence.

The second piece of information is a number and will outline your child's attitude, effort and behaviour in lessons. This will fall into one of four categories:

1	Outstanding: a student who is consistently highly motivated and ambitious, with an excellent work ethic. A student who takes responsibility for their learning and is proactive and goes beyond the expectations of the teacher.
2	Good: a student who is motivated and has a good work ethic. They are keen to work and to learn, and is usually enthusiastic , participating actively in lessons. They make use of opportunities to reinforce learning and can be independent.
3	Requires improvement: a student whose motivation, and work ethic, is inconsistent
4	Cause for Concern: a student who is rarely motivated and has a poor work ethic.

Categories 3 and 4 are further broken down to allow teachers to highlight the specific area that a child might need to improve in; effort, attitude or homework.

3a. **Requires improvement:** a student whose motivation, and work ethic, is inconsistent. Is not always actively **engaged** with the lesson and may need prompting to keep focussed on a task. Does not make the most of opportunities to reinforce learning beyond lessons.

3b. **Requires improvement:** a student whose has repeated produced homework late or that is not up to the standard expected. on a task.

3c. **Requires improvement:** a student whose behaviour in lessons has had to be challenged on more than one occasion, this may include repeatedly talking when the teacher or another student is speaking or calling out or not listening.

3d. **Requires improvement:** a student whose behaviour in lessons has had to be challenged on more than one occasion and whose homework is often late or not up to standard.

4a. **Cause for Concern:** a student who is rarely motivated and has a poor work ethic. Shows **little enthusiasm** for learning, needing constant supervision, and prompting. Gives up easily, especially if work is challenging or if low marks are received; shows **little resilience**; may refuse, or take steps to avoid, advice or requests to improve the work.

4b. **Cause for Concern:** a student whose behaviour is not appropriate and has had to be moved seats or removed from the lesson so that the lesson can proceed without distraction or interruption.

The final report in year 7 issued in the summer term, will come with an Attitude to Learning, the outcome of the end year assessments and a predicted GCSE split grade. This grade will be a split as shown below and will give an early indication of the most likely outcome for your daughter in a given subject at the end of year 11.

For example:

Subject	ATL	ATL	End of Year Exam	Predicted Grade
Maths	A	1	78%	5/6
Art	A	2	72%	6/7
History	B	3a	80%	6/7
Science	C	4	97%	8/9

Sources of Support for Pupils

Students who are having difficulty in a school subject should not hesitate to speak to the subject teacher. Often the problem can be resolved quite easily. It helps teachers to help their pupils if they know about difficulties sooner rather than later. There are many sources of help in school with other kinds of problems: there are some suggestions in the student planner. Year 10 peer mediators and Miss Crouch, Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator are regularly available. The School Nursing Service information can be found via this link: [School Nursing | Livewell Southwest](#)

The Student Support Base (A01), teachers, tutors, support staff and older pupils are always ready to help and the school has access to a wide variety of further support should it be needed. As students grow up, they will become increasingly independent and keen to solve their own problems. However, maintaining a regular dialogue with your daughter about her life at school will give you an idea of how she is feeling. If she seems unhappy about something at school, do encourage her to talk to someone about it.

Homework

We do not operate a 'one size fits all' homework schedule, instead homework is set when it most effectively supports learning, ensuring it is purposeful. Each subject area will set homework either weekly or fortnightly. The specific approach taken by different subject areas is outlined in the homework timetable for each tutor group (this can be found on our website).

Homework may take a variety of forms. Usually, it will build on what has been covered in the lesson. If research on the internet is a required part of the homework, it can be done in school.

Please encourage your child to develop good homework routines at home, some possible examples are:

- To spend a set or agreed amount of time working independently each weekday evening in a quiet room.
- No electronic games/TV/social media before their homework is completed or until they have worked for the agreed amount of time.
- Ensure that they do regular work at home. Sometimes students may say that they don't have homework, and whilst this may be the case now and then, it is more likely that there are some tasks that need completing. If students have finished their set tasks, they could revisit their learning, perhaps by – reading and/or revising to re-enforce learning and to develop good habits and routines. A small amount of work regularly is often better than a large amount at the 'last minute'.
- Avoid doing homework late at night.

Parents need to ensure that their children are doing neither too little nor too much homework. "I haven't got any homework" will very rarely be true, and, in any case, there is always learning and reading to do. On the other hand, some students spend excessive amounts of time on their homework, perhaps copying it out again if they have made a small mistake or paying too much attention to presentation. This is not helpful and is not expected by teachers.

A balanced approach to homework is needed. Parents may need to help their child manage their time. If your child can establish good habits for doing homework in Year 7, these are likely to stay with her throughout her time in education.

Research shows that children who complete their homework to re-enforce their learning often perform much better in school than those who do not complete all of their homework. We are very keen to work together with you to help our students develop good routines.

Students who continually choose to not complete a piece of homework will receive a detention after school.



Extra-Curricular Activities

In addition to their lessons, pupils at Plymouth High School are able to take part in a wide range of other activities, clubs and societies. We encourage students to join in with activities, in or out of school, which will give them enjoyment and broaden their experience. It is an ideal time to try new activities. Many extra-curricular activities in school take place in the lunch hour, so that students who have a long journey to school can also take part. A list of regular extra-curricular activities is published each term and is displayed on our website.

The precise nature of extra-curricular activities available at any one time varies according to the season and to the enthusiasm of students and members of staff. There are always plenty of sports and music activities, for various tastes and abilities. Languages clubs, ICT, Textiles, DT/STEM and Art clubs are a few of the other activities. If any parents have a particular enthusiasm and expertise which they would like to share, or if they can help support sports teams, for example if they are qualified coaches, we will be delighted to hear from you!

The House system is a strength of the school and is an important source of extra-curricular activity. The Houses are led by the Sixth Form, who do an excellent job in getting students of all ages to work together towards the annual House festivals and competitions. There is an inter-house Drama Festival in December, a Dance Festival in March and a Music Festival in July. Sports competitions take place in their season, with the major events of the Swimming Gala and Sports Day in the summer term. The House system provides everyone, no matter what their talents, with opportunities to take part in some way, however small, as each student's contribution is vital to the success of the whole. Commendations given for achievement are also House points which go towards the total achieved by the House in the House competition.

Through getting involved in extra-curricular activities, your child will learn the benefits of working with others, organisational skills and the importance of reliability and commitment. She will develop confidence. She may also find a lifelong interest.

Parents will, however, need to watch that daughters do not get involved in too many activities. There are still only 24 hours in a day and it is not possible to do everything, however enthusiastic your child is! She will need to make choices and commit herself to her chosen activities.

Thinking, Teaching and Learning

At Plymouth High School for Girls, we integrate cognitive science and metacognition into our teaching and learning approach. Collaborating with the University of Exeter, we are currently working towards becoming an accredited 'Thinking School'.

Cognitive science is about understanding how the brain learns and retains information. Making this the focus of our classroom practice allows us to tailor our learning activities to maximise your child's potential. Metacognition empowers your child to think about their thinking and developing essential habits like self-awareness, goal-setting and regular reflection.

We use a variety of thinking, teaching and learning strategies which benefit from proven cognitive science and metacognitive research, including:

- **Edward De Bono's Thinking Hats** encourage students to approach problems from different perspectives, enhancing creativity, decision-making, and fostering a well-rounded approach to learning.
- **Tony Ryan's Thinkers Keys** unlock creative thinking by encouraging students to generate alternative ideas, explore different possibilities, and think outside the box, leading to innovative problem-solving and the development of a flexible mindset.
- **David Hyerle's Thinking Maps** are helpful tools that help students visually organise their thoughts, make connections between ideas, and think more clearly
- **Art Costa's Habits of Mind** introduce important skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and effective communication, helping students become confident and adaptable learners who are ready to succeed in school and in life.

Aligning perfectly with our motto "for life, not school, we learn", these approaches equip your child with lifelong learning skills that extend far beyond their time in school. We are dedicated to ensuring that your child receives the best possible education, one that prepares them to thrive in an ever-changing world.

David Britz-Colwill
Assistant Headteacher

The National Curriculum

The National Curriculum lays down what each school pupil is entitled to be taught. The subjects which must be taught during key stage 3 are English, Mathematics, and Science, (known as the 'core subjects'), Design and Technology, Computing, History, Geography, French, Art and Design, Music, Citizenship and Physical Education Programmes must also include Religious Education, Citizenship, Sex Education and Careers Education.

For each subject a 'programme of study' sets out what must be covered during each key stage. Schools have the freedom to determine how and when it is taught.

Year 7 Curriculum

Plymouth High School for Girls aims to be an outstanding grammar school for the 21st century remaining true to the philosophy of the school's motto 'for life, not school, we learn'.

Included here is our Year 7 curriculum which:

- Promotes a culture of high aspiration enabling personal and academic success
- Prepares students to think confidently and independently
- Provides an outstanding education for all, the key to this being high quality teaching
- Provides enjoyment, excitement and challenge for all, stimulating an enthusiasm for lifelong learning
- Prepares students to become active citizens, equipped to succeed in a world of rapid change

Students at Plymouth High School experience the full National Curriculum, including Drama.

The school week is divided into 25 lessons of 60 minutes each – five lessons per day. To make it possible to distribute lesson time between subjects, the timetable is organised on a fortnightly basis, into Week A and Week B. The resulting 50-period fortnight is divided up for Year 7 as follows. There will be slight variations in the core subjects in Years 8 and 9.

English	5
Mathematics	5
Science	5
French/German	3/3
Physical Education	4
Technology	3
Art	3
Drama	3
Geography	3
History	3
Music	2
Religious Studies	3
ICT	3
PSHE	1
Wellbeing	1

In addition to lessons, students have registration and a 20 minute form time each morning. Afternoon registration takes place at the start of lesson 5. Every week Year 7 will attend an assembly. House assemblies are led by the House Captains and Heads of House. When not in assembly, students are with their form tutors.

Wellbeing Curriculum

A programme of study and a language that is used in order to facilitate the growth of the person in order to flourish in every aspect of their life.



At Plymouth High we take the emotional health and wellbeing of students very seriously. We have implemented a wellbeing curriculum to complement and expand on the PSHE programme with the intention of giving students the ability, space and time to focus on their growth as a person.

Why teach wellbeing?

- To take a more proactive approach in addressing the emotional needs of our students.
- Mental health issues are on the rise.
- Happiness (think contentedness) levels are at an all-time low in young people.
- Our students, and students across the city want more education on this.
- To give our students the tools and skills to allow them to flourish.
- Raise aspirations, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Build resilience in students to cope with adversity.

How can I support my daughter?

One of the main aims of the programme is to develop self-awareness. A way we are facilitating this is to encourage them to write a journal. Your encouragement of your daughter to write in her journal when she is feeling stressed is helpful as we can then pick that up in wellbeing lessons. Encouraging your daughter to use her mindfulness practice when feeling distressed or stressed, would also be very helpful. Talking to your daughter about what she has been working on in wellbeing helps to raise the profile and the importance of fostering the skills to take their wellbeing into account.

Mindfulness

Within the curriculum we are studying and developing a mindfulness practice as a tool to help students make the right decisions and choices within the behaviours and relationships. The model we are using is referred to as MBSR Mindfulness based stress reduction. Starting and mastering a practice of this at an early age can significantly benefit the whole person. This year will see the first delivery of the b mindfulness course taught to them. More information about the course can be found on this link <https://mindfulnessinschoolsorg/what-is-b/b-curriculum/>

Every lesson will have home practice (homework) to facilitate self-awareness and build her practice.

1. Introduction and expectations	15. Sun safety
2. Healthy Eating	16. Oral Health
3. Hydration	17. ANTS and unhelpful thinking
4. The importance of Sleep	18. Kindness and compassion 1-10 commandments to human relations
5. to 14b Mindfulness in Schools course	

Should you have any questions about the philosophy or content of the lessons, please feel free to contact me.

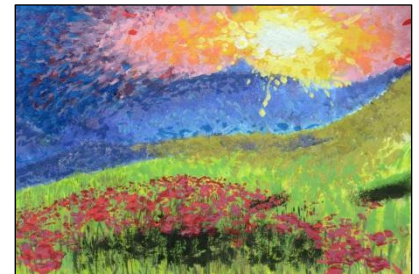
Mrs S Lee, Head of Personal, Social and Health Education

A Subject-by-Subject Look at Year 7 and Beyond

Art & Design

The Year 7 Course

In Art in Year 7, students explore ways of capturing the beauty of the amazing natural world around us here in the Southwest. From the dramatic beaches and beautiful parks to the rugged beauty of Dartmoor, students will follow in the footsteps of Southwest artists who over time have responded to the incredible scenes that surround us. Students learn to master the use of gestures, marks and colours in their Artwork drawing inspiration from local land and seascapes. Year 7 students are introduced to a wide range of 2D media – paints, chalks, oil pastels, charcoal and inks. They are taught how to sketch and then how to build up a composition and complete the course with a solid understanding of how to make realistic and expressive artwork and the Art history that underpins this journey. In Year 7 students are introduced to the PHSG Art project – their learning from relevant and inspiring artists, some key historical figures and others contemporary practitioners, leads them into a process of personal experimentation, developing their skills and visual idea towards their own unique final piece, made from their own photographic source. Through this process, students learn to and grow in confidence in their ability to make effective, informed, critical decisions as their work progresses. With a careful balance of learned skills and independent development, students learn and create refined outcomes that they are understandably very proud of.



Good Learning in Art and Design in Year 7

Students coming to PHSG have encountered a wide range of Art experiences at Primary School. Through Year 7, the Art Dept brings all students, no matter what their previous experiences have been, up to a strong standard, equipping them with core skills which will be built upon throughout their KS3 Art education and beyond. We set foundations for what we expect, including appropriate conduct in an Art room and how to maintain high quality sketchbooks. There will be many opportunities where pupils can extend their Learning, through extension work, separate projects and Art Club.

Thinking and reflecting skills underpin the whole Year 7 project, with students using a variety of methods and techniques to support them in planning and making critical decisions.

Beyond Year 7

In Year 8 students explore how objects are used in Art and what they represent and mean to us in our own lives. Students learn how to draw key geometric objects using measuring to create a structure to support their observation before creating their own final Still Life piece. Their Still

Life can be a vehicle to discuss issues using symbolism to attach meaning to their objects and composition.

Year 9 functions as a GCSE Preparatory year in PHSG Art, where students will experience working in key Art areas - 3D in clay, print on lino and digital drawing combining physical drawing with digital.

Assessment in Art and Design

Through a project, students demonstrate skills and abilities that fall under four areas, the **4 Assessment Objectives**, which generally occur chronologically in a student's project. When we mark students' work, from Years 7 - 11, we use the **4 Assessment Objectives** which underpin the Art Curriculum at PHSG.

AO1	Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
AO2	Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes .
AO3	Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
AO4	Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Students will, with their teacher's support, monitor how they develop their different skills under the four Assessment Objectives.

Homework

Weekly homework of approximately 30mins are set throughout Year 7. They are a vital part of the course, either building on skills learned in previous lessons or as preparation for forthcoming ones. They can take many forms, from research to specific exercises, from reflecting to collecting equipment, and are expected to be completed to the student's full potential. If a student has any difficulties with completing homework the Art Dept is more than happy to help, providing the issue is brought to them prior to the day the work is to be submitted. Art Homework is set most weeks. There are two lunchtimes a week where students can 'Drop-In' to Art where there is a member of the Art Team available to support them with any difficulties, printing issues etc.

Other Information

The Art Dept in PHSG is a vibrant environment where students of all levels of ability thrive and enjoy coming to lessons. Students arrive enthusiastic and clearly enjoy the creative and technical processes we explore. We show students how, with consideration, practise and determination, they can create amazing artwork. Look out for the lunchtime Art Club where fun activities and projects are delivered by A level Art Captains.

Mr T Varrall, Head of Art

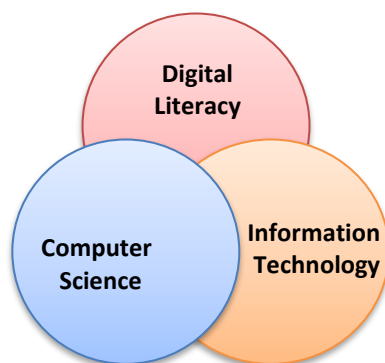
Computing

A high-quality computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. By building on this knowledge and understanding, pupils are equipped to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content. Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world (National Curriculum 2014)

The Year 7 Course

Students in Year 7 have one Computing lesson per week. The National Curriculum in Computing identifies three main strands.

Computer science is the computation: what can be how to compute it, and applied to the solution of



scientific and practical study of computed, how computation may be problems.

Digital literacy is the ability to effectively, responsibly, safely and critically navigate, evaluate and create digital artefacts using a range of digital technologies. The creation of digital artefacts will be integral to much of the learning of computing. Digital artefacts can take many forms, including digital images, computer programs, spreadsheets and 3D animations.

Information technology is concerned with how computers and telecommunications equipment work, and how they may be applied to the storage, retrieval, transmission and manipulation of data.

Topics covered in Year 7 include:

- Introduction to the School Network
- Programming in Kodu
- A basic look inside a computer and see how it works
- HTML coding
- Advanced office skills

Due to the changing nature of aspects of Computing and the introduction of the new curriculum the schemes of work are developing.

In all aspects of the course in Computing, students are encouraged to review, modify and evaluate their work. As a result, students become reflective and responsible users, creators and developers of information technology, with an awareness of its impact on daily life and society.

Beyond Year 7

Work in **Year 8** continues to follow the National Curriculum. Students will be encouraged to develop and evaluate solutions to more complex situations.

Good Learning in Computing in Year 7

Good learning in Computing is more than developing competence in the use of software packages. Higher levels are characterised by students acquiring the skills of **independent learning** and **efficiency**; ability to reflect on their practice and transfer their skills as appropriate to other tasks and projects.

Assessment

Student Self-Assessment and Teacher Assessment take place on a regular basis.

Homework

At times, students may be asked to do short planning or research activities.

You can support your daughter

While students may understand computer programs, surfing the internet, chat rooms and multi-player games better than many adults, they still need your guidance. The following website has links to support students and parents: <http://wwwbbccouk/webwise/0/>. We will be using <http://thinkuknowcouk> in lessons and there is a parents' section to that site.

Many of the tools used in lessons are available as free downloads including Kodu and Audacity.

Mr P Richards, Subject Leader for Computing

Design & Technology

Our vision is about designing with a purpose. Products are designed and made for use in the real world. Students have the chance to think critically and develop solutions to real life problems.

At KS3 a carousel approach to the D&T curriculum is used to build confidence across different material areas. They are taught by specialist staff, who have outstanding subject knowledge, to stretch and challenge the students accordingly. There is consistency in the format of the projects in that all will have a problem to solve with standardised assessment materials used.

The Year 7 Course

The context for the year 7 course across Design and Technology is:

How can products be designed to raise money for charities most in need?

Resistant Materials:



What is my problem?

The National Trust is Europe's largest conservation charity and their work enables us all to enjoy and appreciate the nation's countryside, coastline, gardens, historic buildings and collections – which encapsulate so much of the history of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

They rely on the support of members, donors, volunteers and grant-making bodies, as well as income from commercial activities such as retail and catering, to look after the places in their care.

In order to increase sales in their retail shops they have identified small decorative items and children's toys sell particularly well.

You have two problems to solve.

The first is how to design a tealight holder which will appeal to National Trust customers.

The second is how to design a ball hurler (a mini version of a medieval trebuchet or catapult) which will fit well in the Trust's castle gift shops.

Design brief: What is my solution?

Design and make a suitable tealight holder, this will be designed and manufactured using 2D CAD software (CorelDraw) and the CAM will be the use of a laser cutter. The tealight holder will be manufactured in three laser plywood sections to make the holder.

You will design and make your own medieval trebuchet (mini catapult). The trebuchet will be manufactured using hand tools and workshop equipment. You will also be introduced to mechanisms, such as levers to help you understand how the catapult section works as part of the project.

Pupils also have an introduction to Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Computer Aided manufacturing (CAM). Pupils will produce a tealight holder made from laser plywood.

The project will include research, product analysis and design skills, leading to an introduction to 2D CAD software CorelDraw. With the use of CAD, students will design a holder with engraved detail onto the top.

Pupils will also design and make a mini trebuchet using hand tools in the workshop, learning accurate measuring and marking out skills and understanding how levers work.

The main aim of this unit is to develop pupils' understanding of materials and the safe use of hand tools and machines to cut and shape materials.

They will be expected to draw upon knowledge from other subjects to aid with the development of their design and make project.

Basic knowledge of the properties of wood and its manufacture will need to be taught to progress.

Pupils gain the knowledge, skills, and understanding they need to carry out the task successfully through a series of demonstrations and individual support as necessary They:

- Use a range of cutting, shaping and forming processes, eg belt sander and pillar drill.
- Use specified hand-tools to cut and form materials safely, eg Tenon saw, Chisel and mallet, files and abrasive paper.
- Observe the use of CAM to manufacture their tealight holder

There are also opportunities for pupils to:

- Use 3D modelling software, to evaluate their work and suggest improvements.
- Reinforce knowledge and understanding of other relevant materials and manufacturing processes.
- Learn that accuracy and marking out are important parts of designing and making a product.

Textiles:



What is my problem?

The National Trust is a charity that needs your help to protect the UK's best-loved places in our care, to ensure they remain special for everyone. They are asking for your help to design and make a prototype cushion that could be sold in their visitor shops to help raise money for this. It needs to have a strong relationship with the trust's ethos, protecting nature.

Design Brief: What is my solution?

Design a cushion that represents the theme and ethos of the National Trust. You must include a motif that can be applied to your cushion through applique methods.

Your cushion must be made to a high standard and be suitable as a souvenir or gift.

- What will you need to research to gain inspiration for your ideas?
- How will you ensure your cushion appeals to their target market?
- How can you make sure it is a suitable price to fit into their stores?

The main aim of this unit is to develop pupils' understanding of designing and manufacturing, with a focus on fabric construction and working properties. Pupils will also tackle a design-and-make assignment on the theme of "nature" in which they manufacture their own cushion in response to the problem.

The course will include research, design, manufacture and evaluation. Students will be introduced to the basics of textiles, featuring use of hand and machine sewing.

Students will produce a basic pattern that will utilise mathematical skill from across the curriculum as well as planning detailed manufacture with consideration of tolerances.

The decorative technique of Applique will be taught and applied to their cushion using machine embroidery skills and hand embroidery embellishment. They will finish the construction of their cushion using the sewing machine.

Pupils gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to carry out the design and make assignment successfully through product evaluation activities and focused practical tasks.

Students will:

- Evaluate existing products
- Use a range of textile tools including sewing machine
- Gain an understanding of how materials are constructed from fibre to fabric.

There are also opportunities for pupils to:

- Use testing to evaluate their work as it progresses
- Reinforce their knowledge and understanding of textile materials and processes
- Learn that planning is an important part of designing and making a product

Food and Nutrition:



'5 a day'

What is my problem?

Currently it is suggested that we eat a minimum of 5 pieces of fruit or vegetables a day. Persuading teenagers to eat more fruit and vegetables is currently a government target as around only 9% of children eat their 5 a day. How can a National Trust café provide a healthy and enticing menu for young people?

What is my solution?

Learning through making a series of dishes, you will need to plan, make and evaluate a dish that will encourage teenagers to eat more fruit and vegetables.

In this unit, pupils work towards to the end point task by learning about the many and various uses of fruits and vegetables and begin to look at how sugar is present in many unexpected dishes. This will include researching the current five a day guideline for healthy eating, exploring the different classifications of vegetables and their uses as well as identifying the different names for sugar. They will also be able to explain the difference between the terms 'sugar free' and 'no added sugar'.

Throughout the project, pupils will learn how to work independently, and safely in the kitchen and will be given the opportunity to learn how to use a variety of different kitchen equipment. Pupils gain the ability to work to deadlines and learn how to manage their time effectively.

Pupils will be asked, during this unit to learn and follow the 4C's of hygiene and will investigate, both theoretically and practically the rubbing in, creaming and whisking methods of food preparation, which will give them the basic skills to produce a number of dishes. Throughout each session they will work on developing their knife skills.

The design brief is written not only to reinforce pupils' learning, but also to allow them the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they have gathered throughout the course, as well as allowing a good degree of control and creativity over their final practical session. The unit will also focus on the cross curricular skills of research and evaluation.

Good Learning

Thinking maps are used to support students exploring initial ideas and further to help them formulate processes in manufacture. Thinking hats support student's ability to evaluate products that they make as well as those made by others.

From KS3 onwards, we want our students to experience success that is not just measured by their examination grades. We strive to support them in developing the confidence to take risks, ask questions and explore alternative solutions without fear of being wrong.

Pupils' work is marked in line with the marking criteria around specific skills:

research and design

manufacture

evaluation

knowledge and theory

However, the Design and Technology Department also measures students' success by referencing a much wider range of criteria.

These include the following:

Enthusiasm for the subject

Aptitude for the subject

Resilience to overcome problems independently but recognising how to work well within a team

Ability to work under pressure

Ability to manage their own time

Student's work will be assessed alongside the schools marking policy which includes a predicted GCSE grade, accompanied by comments including WWW (What Went Well) and EBI (Even Better If) that will enable students to identify how they can improve.

Homework will be set on a fortnightly basis and will generally cover the theoretical aspects of Design and Technology that support sessions undertaken in lessons. All work is expected to be fully thought through and well presented.

During key stage 3 Design and Technology aims to give a broad experience of all areas of the subject in order that the pupils can progress and be successful at GCSE level. At the end of Year 9 pupils can opt to study Design and Technology: Resistant Materials, Graphics, Textiles or Food and Nutrition at GCSE level.

Mrs G Young, Head of DT

Drama

The Year 7 Course

During years 7-9 each pupil will have three drama lessons a fortnight. These lessons are designed to build confidence and encourage students to work together in group situations. It allows them to be creative whilst exploring various ideas and issues. In each year throughout key stage 3, students are taught various skills and techniques needed in Drama.

Year 7 Drama aims to start with the basics to build confidence and understanding before introducing new techniques and approaches that will prepare them for the year 8 curriculum and allow them to become more imaginative performers.

They will study:

An Introduction to Basic Drama Skills - Here we look at topics such as voice and movement, group co-operation, building narratives, context, silence and pause. This provides all pupils with the fundamental drama skills they will need throughout their Drama studies.

Developing Skills in Role Play - This involves a closer look at building believable narratives and characters and looking at beginnings, endings and the role of the Narrator. Providing students with the basic skills they need to begin to create their own pieces of theatre.

Developing skills in whole group and small group drama and introducing techniques such as hot seating and thought tracking - Here we study the topic of evacuees and use this to put what they have learnt about creating and sustaining character and building convincing narratives into practice.

An introduction to non-naturalistic/Abstract and Physical Theatre - This allows us to introduce new and more creative approaches to drama and performance using the story of Alice in Wonderland and practitioners such as, Frantic Assembly.

Response to a script - This allows students to explore script work around context and characterisation and to develop a polished piece of theatre for performance.

Assessment

Throughout Years 7-9, assessment is undertaken through continuous feedback and evaluation from staff and peers. Pupils are also required to develop skills in self-evaluation to aid improvement and development. Three formal assessments are made during the year which are graded and then converted to levels for reports, to enable parents as well as pupils to monitor progression within Drama.

Homework

Homework in Drama tends to evolve from practical work done in lessons, but occasionally students may be required to undertake some research or complete a small written assignment.

Good Learners in Drama

To make good progress in Drama, pupils should approach practical work with commitment and enthusiasm, developing an ability to both contribute ideas and listen to those of others. They should become familiar with and use the thinking processes and thinking tools to reflect upon their progress and understand how to improve. They must also become familiar with the vocabulary of Drama and incorporate the various techniques learnt independently. Pupils should also listen and respond to any feedback provided, whether this be written or verbal, and apply it to their subsequent work.

Miss C Crouch, Head of Drama

English

The Year 7 Course

The English curriculum is structured around the same four Literary genres studied at GCSE: a modern text; a nineteenth century text; poetry; Shakespeare. Language skills and activities are taught through these texts and students will be taught the requisite approaches to writing both fiction and non-fiction. There are also opportunities to develop oracy skills.

Beyond Year 7

The Year 8 course is both varied and challenging and follows the same structure with students encountering increasingly more challenging texts.

The students are given opportunities to write for a variety of audiences and purposes which is, again, a good foundation for GCSE.

Good Learning in English

Progress is made in English through reading both in class and at home and attempting more challenging books. As work is completed in class and at home, students will be able to assess their progress and discuss their work with their teacher. Taking part in discussions and asking questions is crucial to ensuring learning takes place and often these discussions are framed by use of Thinking Tools.

Assessment

The work of Year 7 students will be assessed in a variety of ways. There will be regular comprehension-style activities as part of the regular diet of homework. Language work will be assessed in the same way. Literature work will be assessed through scaffolded essay approaches.

Homework

Homework is compulsory. One piece will be set per fortnight and will mostly be set via Educake. Students will have full training on this in the first lessons of the academic year. Notwithstanding specific agreed circumstances, failure to complete homework will result in a departmental detention and a letter home.

Mrs Blunden-Currie, Head of English

Geography



The Year 7 Course

The Geography course in Year 7 aims at developing students' skills through investigations at a range of scales, from local to global. We start with the immediate locality of the students' new school and develop awareness of connections and similarities in the British Isles.

Autumn Term	A sense of place and amazing maps: developing Geographical skills - this involves making and using maps at different scales – including Ordnance Survey maps and the use of atlases Formation of Tors.
Spring Term	The UK and other Fantastic Places: We shall unpick the wonders of the Great British weather and study the country as a whole. Students will develop their understanding of other places that are near to us as we study Europe.
Summer Term	Africa and our Climate past: Following on from Europe we shall take an extended look at the continent of Africa. Understanding levels of development, investigating different biomes and looking into population distribution. Finally, we shall investigate glaciation and how it changes landscapes

Good Learning in Geography in Year 7

Through studying Geography, we expect students to be active researchers who have a sense of responsibility and are capable of independent thought - enabling them to be adaptable citizens in the 21st century. We want students to have a lively interest in their surroundings and in the variety of human and physical processes which influence the development of areas.

In Year 7, students develop their geographical skills. Helping them use a map whenever possible is a fantastic idea, so if you are off on holiday, or just visiting friends see if they can navigate their way It is also useful for them to locate places in the news. An interest in local issues in the news would help to develop students' powers of investigation. I love nothing better than when a student comes in with an amazing fact or hot off the press information about the world around us!

Beyond Year 7

We develop students' awareness of the wider world through further global examples in Year 8 and 9. We develop students' independent study skills with extended work on Russia, China and the Middle East.

Assessment in Geography

Assessment in Geography is usually through integrated tasks and end of unit tests. Descriptions of the grades given are affixed in students' exercise books. From time to time, students may be required to revise for short tests. They will be given warning of these tests.

We work within the school's Assessment for Learning Policy.

Homework

Homework is integral to the Geography course - it aims to consolidate or extend the work covered in class. Students will be expected to spend a short amount of time each week looking back at classwork to ensure they understand the topics covered and developing their revision techniques.

Mr L Graves, Head of Geography

History

The Year 7 Course

Pupils will be introduced to the skills which all historians use to solve past mysteries. We use lots of sources: films, pictures, etc, to develop the skills needed to find out how we know about the past. History also requires a great deal of “thinking”; we set challenging questions so the students have plenty of chances to have their own opinions. There are few “right” answers in history so students can devise their own theories as long as they can find evidence to support them – this is what many of them love about the subject.

Throughout Year 7, students will acquire knowledge on the following areas:

- **The Monarch vs The People** – Students will begin by exploring how the rise of the power of kings in England led to increasing tension and friction with the people. Starting with a focus on Anglo Saxon England, students will explore the impact of the Norman Conquests and monarchs like King John had on society. Students will then look at the rise of people power first with the rise of Parliament and then the Peasants’ Revolt.
- **The Monarch vs Religion** – Students will look at the rising tension between the power of the monarch and the power of the church. Developing an understanding of the importance of the Church in Medieval society, students will look at the power rivalry which led to the murder of an Archbishop through to the actions of Henry VIII and the Reformation.
- **The Monarch vs Everyone** – Year 7 will conclude with how the ideas explored throughout Year 7 culminate with the English Civil War, the rise of Oliver Cromwell and the Glorious Revolution.

Beyond Year 7

In Year 8, students will continue to build on the knowledge and skills of history by looking at how ideas and attitudes evolved with the rise and fall of the Transatlantic slave trade, the industrial revolution and the fight for democracy. Students then explore how revolutions in America and France would lead to a rise in new ideas that would eventually culminate in the First World War.

From Year 9 students are fully focused on global history and how the events of World War One set in motion a period of massive instability with the rise of dictators and extremist across the world.

Learning Outcomes

Along with the content, students will be taught key skills that are vital to success in History. These will include different historical concepts such as cause and consequence, continuity and change and significance; skills of historical enquiry such as using historical sources, framing questions and independent research; and historical perspectives such as examining different interpretations of the past. They can be summarised as follows:

Knowledge & Understanding

- Show increasing depth of factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of the history of Britain and the wider world
- Describe the characteristic features of a period in reasonable factual detail and begin to make links and comparisons between different periods

Analysis

- Give reasons for or results of events and begin to analyse which are more important than others – which are long term, short term or trigger reasons
- Begin to explain what changes have occurred and begin to analyse why they have occurred and which are more important than others

Using historical evidence

- Use a range of sources and identify which are the most useful for the particular task
- Begin to explain why one should not believe everything one reads - evaluating and being critical of the evidence
- Use quotations to support answers and conclusions

Understanding different historical perspectives

- Describe how some events, people, and changes have been seen in different ways and can suggest possible reasons for this

Communication

- Select and organise information to produce structured work, making appropriate use of dates and terms

Assessment

Students will be expected to complete one assessment in each half term. This will be done under timed conditions and students will be given help and support in preparing for these assessments. Assessments will be marked with feedback given on what students have done well and where they can improve further. Tasks designed to support student progress will be set accordingly.

Good Learning in History

Good learning occurs when pupils listen attentively, concentrate on their work and persevere even when it appears to be too challenging. Asking questions is vital in order to consolidate their understanding and develop their confidence. Students should be critical of the evidence they are shown, not simply accept the information at face value. Various techniques such as highlighting key words, learning to select information rather than copy, use visual ways of representing information, eg diagrams may be used.

Homework

A homework task is usually set once a fortnight. The guidance given is a minimum of 40 minutes long in Year 7, rising to 1 hour in Years 8 and 9. This homework is usually to build on a topic studied during the lesson or to prepare topics for presentation in future lessons. Some homework may be projects which may last over several weeks. Help from the History staff is always available out of class as well as in class: students just have to arrange to see their teacher. The school library is well stocked with History books and the internet can be a useful source of information, although work which is just downloaded without having been annotated or condensed and written/retyped is not accepted.

Mr R Mallard, Head of History

Mathematics

The Year 7 Course

The aim of mathematics in Year 7 is to build on and develop the key concepts taught at primary school and quickly be immersed into the challenges of both new content and a persistent focus on development of problem-solving skills and depth of thought. We expect students to build and retain knowledge, learning **FACTS and FORMULAE**. We model and expect students to be able to rehearse learned skills with confidence, showing **FLUENCY**. We think, discuss, plan and reason with unique problems connected to our learned concepts, showing **FLEXIBILITY**.

Lesson time is spent thinking, collaborating, and applying skills and techniques, carefully developing written Mathematical accuracy, language, crafted workings, and notation on the page.

Mathematics is based on 6 big ideas:

Number	Ratio and Proportion	Algebra
Geometry	Data Analysis	Probability

Our curriculum is an ambitious seven-year programme, gradually leading to the mastery of these 6 big ideas and supporting all students to several A level pathways and giving them all opportunities to GO FURTHER with their Mathematics learning, into the real world and into their professions.

Good Learning in Mathematics in Year 7

Quite often anxiety is associated with mathematics and, when present, we work hard to dispel this feeling. Good learners are those students who accept that they will make mistakes and use them as opportunities to move forwards. There is nothing wrong with making a mistake – it is what you do about the mistake that matters. We use thinking hats, thinking maps and opportunities to share and discuss and reflect on common errors together.

Supporting students in Mathematics

You can encourage your child to speak to their teacher for support outside of lessons and we have a classroom-based support club on Tuesday lunch times if students would like some help with a specific task, skill or Sparx question. Parents and carers can get help to support current learning or revision at home and we make a conscious effort to ensure that students have access to physical copies of resources (learning booklets, topic lists and knowledge banks) as well as online resources (teams and Sparx).

Homework – SPARX Maths (online)

We are proud to work with Sparx learning to ensure that our students have effective and appropriate practice work to complete independently each week.

Students and families value the Sparx homework package for its intelligent ability matching software and for the instant feedback that it gives our students as they work through their problems each week.

Students are challenged to complete 100% of their task each week, reaching 100% correct by using the fantastic shadow videos that support each skill as and when they find a problem more difficult. There is a short 5-minute times table task embedded into their weekly set task.

We match the topics to our schemes of learning and include 40% retrieval and consolidation each week so that students are practising new and old Mathematics content each week, embedding skills in their long-term memory.

Students enjoy building XP points to earn prizes and certificates. The platform also offers an independent learning section for students to work on topics of their own choosing which is great for consolidation or revision.

Students have a compulsory task each week which is designed to take around 40 minutes to complete successfully. Students can also complete an additional task at the same level of difficulty (**XP BOOST**) or try a challenging task on the same topic! (**XP TARGET**).

We offer a **TOP UP TUESDAY** club each Tuesday lunch time for students to drop in as and when they need help completing their Sparx homework which is very popular and helps students if they reach a dead end by themselves.

Equipment and resources

Your child is expected to bring their exercise book, learning booklet (given out each half term) and equipment to every lesson – including a scientific calculator (we recommend the Casio FX-85GTCW), protractor, ruler, mini-whiteboard pen, pencil and purple pen for marking and correcting! Your child's half termly booklet is full of information about what is being taught when, which Sparx codes link to primary school learning (to consolidate if needed) and which codes link to new learning. They will be given a mini whiteboard in September, which they should bring to each lesson.

The half termly booklets will also show you the knowledge banks for each half term; what are the year 7 students expected to commit to memory. We hope that families can get involved with the learning at home and can find out everything they need from our exercise books.

Assessment

Your child will sit an assessment three times during the academic year. The result of each assessment will be an opportunity for you to also reflect on your child's progress. Students will have supported and guided opportunities to and expectations for revision at each half term check point and further opportunities to reflect and improve on each performance.

Students enjoy the challenges, organisation and structure of our year 7 curriculum as well as the informal and ad hoc support that our team prides itself on.

Mrs G Freeman-Alford, Head of Mathematics

Music

Music is a key part of the Year 7 curriculum and is taught for three periods over the two-week timetable. The emphasis is very much on practical work, involving singing, playing classroom instruments and listening to music: any students who have their own instrument are also encouraged to bring them to school for music lessons. Students may also participate in musical activities outside the classroom – there is a Choir and Steel Band as well as the school orchestra. Tuition on a variety of instruments, and voice, is available during the school day.

The Year 7 Course

The course follows the requirements of the National Curriculum and key stage 3 strategy for music, and includes Performing, Composing and Listening/Appraising.

Pupils come to Plymouth High School with widely differing musical experiences, hence the emphasis in the first term is on establishing a common ground for all. We begin with looking at the basic elements of music and learn rhythm and pitch reading. Keyboard skills are also developed through the performance of simple melodies. After this, work is roughly divided into half-termly units, covering simple musical forms, basic chords, major and minor scales, Rhythmic Music, Japanese Music and Composition. Students will also be introduced to the music writing program “Sibelius” and other music software during Year 7.

Homework

Homework will be set as appropriate, and may consist of research, written evaluation of classwork, learning of vocabulary, or practice of a class piece (though we recognise that not everybody has access to instruments outside school).

Assessment

As in all practical skills-based subjects, students will be assessed regularly during Music lessons. Formal assessment of individual and group projects will take place at the end of units or specified pieces of work. Assessment criteria may be found in the Music Progress Ladder in the student work booklet.

After Year 7

Students will further develop their skills and understanding. They will revisit the main elements of music, but in different and gradually more challenging ways, and will be introduced to new formal structures and musical styles.

Good Learners in Music

...will focus on listening carefully, learning the vocabulary of music (including staff notation) and above all will be prepared to collaborate and experiment trying out all sorts of ideas in performance and composing work.

Ms K Marcer-Griffiths, Music Department

Modern Foreign Languages – French/German

The Year 7 course in MFL

Everyone can learn a language and the Year 7 course is aimed at developing language learning skills in both French and German that will teach the students how to approach learning any new language, in other words, how to be a good language learner. They will learn: to listen actively and intelligently, to use their brain and logic to work out meanings and to see connections. They will need to learn to memorise in order to build up their knowledge. They will need above all to learn to work together as languages are about communicating with and understanding other people. Our work is presented using sentence builders and follows the Conti approach to learning. This is supplemented by, videos, songs, reading and listening materials and the use of ICT and websites.

Beyond Year 7

In year 8 the students will continue with both languages equally. Through Years 8 and 9 students learn language appropriate for an increasingly wide range of topics and re-use language acquired previously, building their confidence and ability to understand longer texts. In Year 8, there is a focus on the different parts of the present tense, on sentence building and increasing independence, including the use of dictionaries. Students are introduced to the use of other tenses. At the end of year 8 students choose which language they wish to immerse themselves in for year 9 and this will become their preferred language which they continue on to study for GCSE.

Good learning in MFL in Year 7

To be good language learners, pupils are expected to:

- listen to the teacher and to each other
- try to use the language as much as possible with the teacher and with others in the class
- speak clearly and loudly in the classroom
- work with all other members of the class
- work actively throughout the lesson and to take responsibility for learning the content of the lesson

Assessment

Students' progress is assessed to guide their further learning. They are assessed in four skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. This is done informally in class, by peer assessment and by formal assessment tasks. By the end of the year, we would expect that most students to be able to communicate basic information about themselves and give opinions.

Homework:

- Pupils must learn the language covered in the lessons.
- In Year 7 there will be 40 minutes per week for homework (2 x 20 minutes) Some of this time should be used for learning vocabulary using Quizlet.
- Homework must be completed by the set date written work must be handed in on the date requested.
- Each student will have an A5 exercise book which will include classwork, notes and homework and Sentence Builders.

Equipment

- Students are encouraged to have highlighters and glue sticks, as we use these regularly in lessons

Mrs H Walsh, Head of MFL

Physical Education

The Year 7 Course

The Physical Education curriculum in Year 7 is structured to enable students to develop a love for PE and Sport. We do this by offering a range of different activities:

Netball	Dance	Gymnastics
	Athletics	Football
Striking and Fielding	Health Related Fitness	

Physical Education develops pupils' competence and confidence to take part in a range of physical activities that become a central part of their lives, both in and out of school. A high-quality physical education curriculum enables all pupils to enjoy and succeed in many kinds of physical activity. Students are expected to develop a wide range of skills and the ability to use tactics, strategies and compositional ideas to perform successfully. When they are performing, they will think about what they are doing, analyse the situation and make decisions. They are also given time to reflect on their own and others' performances and are encouraged to find ways to improve them.

A high-quality physical education curriculum helps students to develop the confidence to take part in different physical activities and learn about the value of healthy, active lifestyles. Discovering what they like to do and what their aptitudes are at school, and how and where to get involved in physical activity helps them to make informed choices about lifelong physical activity. We highly recommend that all students participate in at least one extra-curricular club each week to further develop class learning.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed through their skill, knowledge and character. This enables us to fairly assess students not only on their physical abilities but also their knowledge and understanding of the sport and how much effort they make through their character. We also promote any leadership skills they may have.

Beyond Year 7

During key stage 3 the PE curriculum is extended to include activities such as Badminton, Basketball, Football, Trampolining and several activities from year 7 are revisited to consolidate learning and improve performance. In KS4 core PE, an options system is in place to allow students to follow a stream of activity of their choice to encourage healthy active lifestyles. Students have the opportunity to undertake GCSE, and A level Physical Education and the nationally recognised Sports Leaders Awards.

Good learning in Physical Education

PE requires students to understand the relationship between skill and the readiness of the body and mind to cope with the activity. Tactics, strategies and compositional ideas need to be considered with students being prepared to try a broad range of approaches to tackling a task or challenge. Students need to be aware of the need to develop their body and mind, improving their stamina, strength and suppleness along with their confidence, determination to succeed and mental alertness. A good student will have a desire to achieve and improve and will be willing

to take part in a range of competitive, creative and challenge-type activities, both as individuals and as part of a team or group.

Non-participation policy

Students are still expected to bring their kit and a note from home explaining why they are unable to take part. They will remain with their teaching group and help in the lesson with other tasks such as umpiring, scoring and coaching.

Mrs A Pickles, Head of Physical Education

Religious Studies



The Year 7 Course

Over the course of the year students will have a broad introduction to Religious Studies. The units covered will be delivered in a variety of ways. In the autumn term, students will begin by considering the importance and nature of religion and Religious Studies. They will look at concepts and beliefs by exploring symbols and ultimate questions.

In the spring term students study a module on Christianity in Modern Life. It enables students to consider key teachings and concepts found within Christianity. It also introduces them to the idea of diversity within the Christian tradition by investigating the differences and similarities in belief and practice in a number of Christian denominations (an understanding of which is a key skill for success at GCSE).

In the summer term students will study a unit on rites of passage from several cultural and religious traditions. They will focus on the use of ritual and symbol in these rites and how they help people make sense of life.

Beyond Year 7

This course will serve as a foundation for the kind of work that we do in Religious Studies here at Plymouth High School. The skills begun and practised in Year 7 will continue to be developed throughout your daughter's time with us. Many students go on to enjoy and be successful in our GCSE and A level courses.

Good learning in RS in Year 7

Thinking and reflecting are keys to progressing in RS. Thinking tools are embedded into our curriculum to support this. It is important to listen well and ask questions. Written work should not be hurried, and care should be taken to produce work that is balanced and well informed. Technical vocabulary should be used where appropriate. When a student is absent it is expected that they make the effort to catch up on missed work. The department's use of Teams facilitates this, as lesson resources and homework tasks can be found there. Students are encouraged to develop independent learning habits by bringing ideas from their wider experiences and from current affairs into our discussions in lessons.

Assessment

Students will complete a number of assessed tasks across the year. These are designed to build the foundations for success further up the school in GCSE examinations.

Homework

Some homework tasks will be written exercises or reading; others will require students to spend time thinking and reflecting and others will be used to prepare their assessed tasks.

Miss T McAuliffe, Head of Religious Studies

Sciences: biology, chemistry and physics

The Year 7 Course

We will be introducing you to **ten big scientific ideas** in Year 7 that you will continue to develop and master over the next five years.

Science has been improving the lives of humans for thousands of years. Biologists have cured plagues with the development of vaccines and have discovered common ancestry for all life through our genes. Physicists have developed ideas that ensure planes fly and that space probes can travel to distant planets. Chemists have developed synthetic materials with incredible properties through complex chemical reactions. Scientific discoveries are inspired by curiosity and imagination and are then confirmed and improved (or rejected) by an evidence-based method. This 'scientific method' rejects ideas that lack evidence, such as alchemy, homeopathy or the idea that the Earth is flat. This same method also embraces changes to existing theories when reliable new evidence is discovered.

Science has also increased the complexity of our lives and has presented moral and ethical questions. Just because something is scientifically possible, should we do it? We also live in a world full of information via the internet, but much of it is inaccurate and unscientific. We hope that mastering these ten big ideas will equip you with the knowledge, understanding and skills such that you can spot fact from fiction and live healthy and prosperous lives.

The ten big scientific ideas are listed below, along with how they are focussed upon in Year 7:

Big idea	Topics explored in Year 7
Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speed• Gravity
Electromagnetism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Magnetism• Electromagnetism
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy costs• Energy transfer
Waves	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sound• Light
Matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The particle model• Separating mixtures
Reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acids and alkalis• Metals and non-metals
Earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earth structure• The Universe
Organisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Movement• Cells
Ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interdependence• Plant reproduction
Genes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Variation• Human reproduction

Mastering an idea means that you have:

1. **Knowledge** of the theories, facts and figures about an idea
2. An **understanding** of the idea so that you can recognise it in unfamiliar situations
3. The ability to use **skills** to help you solve problems or communicate the idea well

The skills we will develop alongside these ideas are:

- Scientific thinking
- Enquiry
- Analysis
- Communication
- Practical competency
- Mathematics

Beyond Year 7

The ten big scientific ideas are returned to each year, but with a slightly different focus, allowing you to master the ideas over time. In Year 11, you will sit six examinations in the sciences which will assess your knowledge, understanding and skills associated with these big ideas. These are known as GCSE exams.

After Year 11, you have the option to study the sciences for a further two years, completing more advanced courses called A levels. Successfully completing these exams allows you to attend university when you leave school at 18 years of age.

Assessment

Your progress will be continually assessed with verbal feedback from your teacher. You will also complete six key assessments throughout the year, where you will receive detailed advice on what went well, as well as on how to improve. Exercise books are not routinely marked however, they are checked once per half-term for completeness and effectiveness. Teacher assessments are made to assess your progress and summaries are sent home periodically in reports which inform your parents of your progress too.

You will typically arrive at PHSG with skills in *describing* scientific ideas using appropriate scientific words. Through Year 7 we encourage increasing confidence in *explaining* ideas using detailed scientific knowledge and understanding.

Homework

Homework is regularly set once per fortnight, as detailed in the Year 7 homework timetable.

Supporting Learning

Most of you, at some point, will find a concept challenging and require additional support to help you understand. At other times, an idea will be of such interest, that you will want to find out more and become an expert in it.

Below are some resources that are available to support your learning to help you reach your potential, or purely for interest:

- Sometimes, a simple chat with your teacher after class can be enough to help you with a difficult idea. We are here to help you.
- You may wish to purchase a copy of our recommended Year 7 textbook: *AQA Activate for KS3 Student Book 1* (ISBN 9780198408246) Students often find their own personal copy valuable for homework and for revision Used copies can often be found online for around £10

	
<p><i>AQA Activate for KS3 Student Book 1</i></p>	<p><i>KS3 Science Complete Revision & Practice – Higher</i></p>
<p>ISBN: 9780198408246</p>	<p>ISBN: 9781841463858</p>

- You may wish to purchase a copy of our recommended Year 7 to 9 workbook: *KS3 Science Complete Revision & Practice – Higher* (ISBN: 9781841463858). Brand new copies can be purchased online for £11.99. Students often find this valuable if they need support or further practice.
- The internet offers many resources BBC Bitesize, Educake, s-cool.co.uk, the Khan Academy and YouTube have many fantastic and relevant videos to help you with further understanding.
- There are also many excellent TV programmes offered on-demand with direct connections with your studies Free content can be found on the BBC iPlayer, and other streaming services.

Mr A Waite, Head of Science

Personal, Social and Health Education in Year 7

At Plymouth High school for Girls, the philosophy driving PSHE is to provide our young people with balanced factual information on a range of issues which may, either now or in the future, directly affect them. Throughout our planning we have tried to emphasise that PSHE can and does make a unique contribution towards our students' education and the development of their personal and social skills. It is also important to stress that our programme is to be complementary to the role of parents.

Aim

Our primary aim:

- To develop well rounded, thoughtful, responsible young adults who are able to play a full and active role in society

Working alongside this are:

- To develop confidence, self- esteem and personal responsibility
- To allow students to make the most of their abilities and realise their full potential
- To develop a healthier and safer lifestyle
- To develop worthwhile and fulfilling relationships and respect differences and show tolerance towards others
- To develop life skills
- To develop knowledge & skills required to make the most of changing opportunities in learning and work
- To explore what it is to be enterprising and to respond to change
- To learn to manage their personal finances
- To help students towards intellectual, emotional and social maturity
- To provide students with the skills to deal with new situations and overcome problems
- To widen students' horizons and encourage them to be positively involved in society

The Year 7 Course

The themes of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World run throughout PSHE lessons in all years at Plymouth High. The main teaching points and experiences delivered are listed below.

1. Friendships and adjusting to changes
2. Puberty and HPV education programme
3. Online Safety
4. Citizenship
5. Personal Safety

Mrs Lee, Head of Personal, Social and Health Education

Student Voice at Plymouth High School for Girls

We believe that part of our role is to raise our students' aspirations. We need, therefore, to encourage more students to participate in the wider life of the school, and beyond. We believe that if our learners are encouraged to take a more overt pride in the school and in themselves, in fact to embody the ethos of their school, then their experience at Plymouth High will be **distinctive** in a manifestly positive way.

We believe that our students need to develop a strong sense of identity with their school - to engender a greater sense of belonging to an institution that will have a profound effect on their character, their achievements, and their future. To achieve this sense of identity and pride, we feel students themselves must be given a voice, an opportunity to have a say in their own education and in the day-to-day experience at Plymouth High.

At Plymouth High every student has the opportunity to become a member of Student Voice. Student Voice is run by the Head Girl Team. Student Council meets once a fortnight to discuss in sub-committees matters concerning the student body. In the past three years, Student Voice has achieved a great deal: fund-raising, managing our recycling scheme, contributing to the School Development Plan, revising the Anti-Bullying Policy, and more. Any student who is interested may attend the meetings. Each Tutor Group is encouraged to send a representative. However, any student may pass on her views on any matter by emailing the Head Girl. We firmly believe that Student Voice can make a difference.

How Can Parents Help?

We recognise the supreme importance of parents in their children's lives and believe that the best education for a child, results from a partnership between the home and the school. Of course, parents' help in more ways than can be summed up in a booklet, but here are some specific suggestions as to how you can help your child's education through partnership with the school:

- By talking with your daughter about the school day;
- By looking at your daughter's books and discussing her work with her. Let her explain or teach something to you!
- By giving your daughter praise, encouragement and support;
- By taking an interest in, but not by doing, homework;
- By providing good working conditions for your daughter's homework;
- By regulating your daughter's use of social media platforms;
- By helping your daughter to organise her time;
- By making sure that she does not miss school except for illness or an emergency;
- By encouraging your daughter to develop extra-curricular interests;
- By encouraging your daughter to read widely and join local libraries;
- By participating in our PTFA

We look forward to many years of fruitful partnership.

Plymouth High School for Girls Anti-Bullying Policy

Principles

At *Plymouth High School for Girls*, we believe that we are a close and supportive community in which every individual is valued. Each person is encouraged to look out for one another and play their part in maintaining the positive relationships the school prides itself on.

Plymouth High School for Girls believes that no person should feel themselves to be the victim of bullying or harassment and that any person who has such concerns has the right to be heard and all of their concerns to be taken seriously and to have any necessary action taken.

We feel the definition of bullying *is the intentional, repetitive, or persistent hurting of one person by another, either mentally or physically*. Any person who feels that they are being abused in this way has the right to seek support, guidance or intervention. Any person who witnesses bullying has the responsibility to report the incident as we all have a role to play in maintaining the close relationships in the school.

Introduction

- i. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989 and in line with the government publications: **Every Child Matters; Don't Suffer in Silence; Working Together to Safeguard Children; and the Human Rights Act 1998** whose principle is that '*all children have a right to an education free from harassment or degradation*'.
- ii. The Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility to ensure no person is the victim of bullying or harassment within these premises.
- iii. We recognise that all staff, governors, parents and students have a full and active part to play in protecting all persons from bullying.
- iv. All staff, governors, parents and students believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of each person.
- v. We recognise that bullying can be both short term and long-term, and we will, therefore, undertake to provide continuing support to a person for whom persistent bullying is perceived to be a problem.

Aims

The Aims of this policy are:

- To encourage tolerance and understanding within our community
- To promote respect across the whole community
- To clarify the role and responsibilities of the Designated Person
- To explain how to proceed if any bullying issues arise
- To explain how these issues will be dealt with

Procedures

- i. If you feel you are being bullied (or someone you know is being bullied), you must TELL SOMEONE
- ii. As requested by Student Voice we have a Designated Person (known as the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator) who is responsible for and will co-ordinate all matters relating to bullying, including incidents that occur off site, and that can affect a student's learning.

- iii. The name of the Co-ordinator is publicised in Assemblies, Newsletters, Pupil Bulletins and Student Planners; students can contact the Co-ordinator through the following methods:
 - Email – Claire.Crouch@phsg.tsat.uk
 - Contacting the Co-ordinator directly in the Drama office or MHL/DRS
- iv. The Co-ordinator will use discretion in order to give the individual raising the concern privacy and ensure issues raised are handled sensitively.
- v. The Co-ordinator will undertake to investigate all incidents of bullying thoroughly and report back to the person raising the concern, and if necessary, refer the matter to another agency.
- vi. In the absence of the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator, the school's Child Protection Officer or Head of Year will fulfil the role.
- vii. Details of how to contact the Co-ordinator will be made available to all students.
- viii. An attempt will be made to help the bully(ies) change their behaviour.
- ix. The bully(ies) will be encouraged to apologise but the Co-ordinator, in consultation with The Headteacher and senior staff, will decide what other consequences will follow in any given situation. In serious cases the Headteacher will consider isolation, suspension or even exclusion for the bully(ies).

Responsibilities

- i. The Co-ordinator will act as a focal point for students, staff, parents and governors on the subject of bullying within these premises.
- ii. The Co-ordinator will keep a written record of all such concerns and investigations and will ensure all records are kept confidential and secure.
- iii. The Co-ordinator will report formally to the Assistant Headteacher and Governors on the matter of bullying in the school.
- iv. The Co-ordinator will undertake relevant training on a regular basis and will be required to develop the understanding of all staff on the signs and indicators of bullying.

Miss Claire Crouch, Anti-Bullying Coordinator

Safety On-line

Your daughter's activity on-line is probably a major part of her life and is just as important for you to monitor and parent as her 'real life' activities.

The progression and development of the internet and the digital world is very rapid and it is hard to keep up with what the latest trends or possibilities may be. It is therefore important to build a relationship of openness and trust with your daughter in terms of her digital presence on-line so that it is not taboo for you to ask her questions about what she has been doing and so that she will speak to you if she gets into difficulties.

Each year the whole staff (teaching and non-teaching) at PHSG received training and awareness raising of safeguarding and child protection issues surrounding the internet. As a result of this we will be further developing our curriculum in this area this year so that the students are well informed about current issues. We will also be forming a parent's group and looking at how we can help parents with these issues. In the meantime, there is a considerable amount of advice and guidance available to you as parents and I have listed some of the best suggestions below. If you would like more advice and guidance in this area, then please do contact us and we will see what we can do.

Tips for parenting a 'digital child':

- Get informed! E-mails and PCs are already out of date Don't forget your daughter may be on-line on her phone, games console or tablet as well as when on the family computer
- Check her social media settings Do you know who can see what about your daughter? Does she know who her 'friends' are? How does her profile appear? Remember once a photo or information is posted it may not be possible to retrieve it
- Ask to see what apps she has on her phone – do you know what they all do?
- If you get problems go for advice to the UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk and enquiries@saferinternet.org.uk
- Have that conversation with her! Ask her if she would be happy if you sat and went through her social media accounts with her – if not then why? Ask what other sites she is using and what for?
- Try to make talking about your digital lives as open as other things – if she is not willing to talk about what she has seen or done on-line then there may be an issue
- If bullying or abuse occurs over a mobile phone, then don't delete things Keep a record Contact your phone company and if you feel it necessary the police If it involves other students at PHSG then please let us know through your daughter's tutor
- Keep a record of the useful sites and addresses below:

Beat bullying	www.beatbullying.org
Report abuse or grooming	http://ceop.police.uk
How-to tutorial videos	www.getnetwise.org
Facebook safety	www.nspcc.co.uk
General internet help	www.thinkuknow.co.uk/ www.kidsmart.org.uk

Learner Support Centre (A01)

The AO1 Learner Support team is overseen by Mrs Payne, Assistant Headteacher.

Staff working in AO1 include Mrs Simister, Learner Support Lead; Miss Shattock, Learner Support and Mrs Hore SEN and Medical admin. The centre has expanded to support young people with a whole range of issues within the school. These include providing social and emotional assistance for individuals, EAL support and advice and guidance for students who are looking to gain top GCSE grades. Training for Peer Mentors is offered to students at the end of Year 9, for them to start at the beginning of Year 10. The Peer Mentors will support the new Year 7s in the transition from primary school.

Complementing the centre's work is a Counsellor from Plymouth Partnership for 2 days a week and a Counsellor from Young Devon for 1 day a week.

What is a Learning Mentor? A Learning Mentor aims to build a one-to-one relationship with a young person and offers, as a professional friend, support, advice and guidance to help overcome barriers to learning and ensure all children achieve their greatest potential.

What is Counselling? A counsellor is specially trained to help young people understand themselves better and find ways to facilitate problem solving. They can help with difficulties in school, at home or with friends.

While many students will find the help and support provided by specialist subject teachers and tutors enough, others may require greater support during periods of time at Plymouth High. The quiet environment provided in the Learner Support Centre, combined with the opportunity for one-to-one assistance helps many students build greater confidence, understanding, and improve organisation, to ensure that each young person fulfils her/his potential.

The centre has an open-door policy; time is available at break and lunchtimes for the students to complete homework, come and eat and socialise with other people from different year groups and tutor groups. Any student experiencing any difficulties may seek advice and guidance from the team at any time in their school career.

Reading at PHSG

Here at Plymouth High School for Girls we seek to ensure all students have a high level of reading proficiency, that they form the habits of reading for pleasure, and that they use reading to direct and develop their sense of scholarship: a love of learning for its own sake, combined with the discovery of the disciplines and areas of knowledge that excite them most.

Because Plymouth High is a selective school, our emphasis is on ensuring that students continue to read texts which not only challenge them, but also expose them to new ideas and vocabulary, whilst embodying autonomous scholarship by developing personal areas of interest. We acknowledge that, even within a selective cohort, students will have differing levels of reading proficiency, and need differing levels of advice and direction in their reading.

During year 7 students will be introduced to the BEDROCK Reader programme. This online programme will provide a pathway to mastery in reading, where all students will have an individualised path with key assessment points to measure the impact of the programme. Not only does this programme improve a student's reading age, but it also develops the vocabulary needed to access the curriculum.




Beyond year 7 we continue to encourage students to read, through the PHSG Cannon and the 15 by 15 initiatives. Reading for pleasure continues alongside the promotion of more academic texts are introduced within different curriculum areas to further learning, understanding and develop scholarship.

Starting secondary school is an exciting time. Your child is becoming more independent and taking more responsibility with their learning. However, as a parent, you may be worried about how they are handling the new demands and wondering what you can do to help.

One of the best things you can do in KS3 is to encourage your child to read for pleasure. Reading habits that were established in primary school should not be stopped once they start Year 7. Research shows that children who enjoy reading do significantly better at school and parents play an important role in helping to develop a love of reading.

The study also found that parents who talk to their children about books, TV programmes and films help to keep their children interested in reading. Having books, newspapers and magazines around at home also made a difference to how interested children were in reading.

Quick ideas for getting books back in their hands...

-  Let them choose what they want to read, rather than choosing what you think they should read
-  Encourage your child to read magazines, comics, blogs and websites as well as books; buy them a subscription to their favourite
-  Talk to your child about books you have read that you haven't enjoyed, as well as ones you've loved

- 📖 Make time to read together if you can – 10 minutes a few times a week will make a big difference
- 📖 Talk about what they are watching on TV/film and see if there are any book tie-ins
- 📖 Join the local library and let them choose some audio books; listen to the audio books in the car
- 📖 Buy books, book vouchers or a magazine as presents/rewards
- 📖 Find out what they are studying in their different subjects and look through websites, magazines or non-fiction books relating to their topics
- 📖 Read yourself – set time aside at the weekend for everyone to down tools and read for 20 minutes.

Helpful questions to ask about what they are reading:

- 📖 Do you like the main character?
- 📖 How do you think it is going to end?
- 📖 What impression do you get of character x or y?
- 📖 Do you think they are likeable? Trustworthy? Suspicious? Etc.
- 📖 Which words or phrases make you think that?
- 📖 Does this book remind you of anything you've already read?
- 📖 If you were that character, what would you have done differently in that situation?
- 📖 Where is the book set? What does it look like in your head? Would you like to visit?
- 📖 Why do you think the author wrote this book?
- 📖 Would you have ended the book differently? Did it end the way you thought it would?
- 📖 Did the problem of the book's plot get solved?
- 📖 If you could change one thing in the book, what would it be?
- 📖 Helpful questions to ask about what they are reading:
- 📖 Do you like the main character?
- 📖 How do you think it is going to end?
- 📖 What impression do you get of character x or y?

- 📖 Do you think they are likeable? Trustworthy? Suspicious? Etc.
- 📖 Which words or phrases make you think that?
- 📖 Does this book remind you of anything you've already read?
- 📖 If you were that character, what would you have done differently in that situation?
- 📖 Where is the book set? What does it look like in your head? Would you like to visit?
- 📖 Why do you think the author wrote this book?
- 📖 Would you have ended the book differently? Did it end the way you thought it would?
- 📖 Did the problem of the book's plot get solved?
- 📖 If you could change one thing in the book, what would it be?

Supporting reading at KS3

Your child will be studying more subjects at secondary school and will be reading in lots of different ways. For example, scientific explanations will require a different reading approach to a fiction novel. Historical sources will need to be read differently to how they read a recipe. Parents who support their child's education make a real difference to how well their child does and there are lots of quick things you can do to help.

Try some skimming and scanning together. Skimming is when you read through a text quickly to find out what the main idea is; scanning is glancing through a piece of text to find a specific piece of information. You can do this with a newspaper or a page in any book – ask your child to find something for you or give them three things to find in a certain time. Why not ask them to scan a report for news of their favourite footballer or to find out the weekend's weather.

Help your child work out what an unfamiliar word means by getting them to read the rest of the sentence and look for clues.

Help by testing your child when they have spellings to learn and have a dictionary around the house for them to look up words they don't know.

Try making time to:

- 📖 Build on the amount of words your child knows – their vocabulary. As they go through secondary school, your child will need to know specialist words and recognise them when they are reading. Take a few words from the George Abbot glossary each week and learn them together

- 📖 Read the books or plays that your child is studying in school – this will hugely boost the conversations you can have about what they think of them. Sharing and comparing ideas will help develop their understanding and personal views
- 📺 Watch the films of the books, plays or topics your child is studying

More information about reading at PHSG can be found on our website.